The Navy has obtained permission from the state of California to kill 200 burros such as these on the China Lake Naval Weapons Center. The HSUS West Coast Regional Office has at least temporarily blocked the killing.

Comment: A Question of Values

By Michael D. Smith
Field Representative, West Coast Region

In light of recent events in Idaho (the roundup and sale of wild horses, with permission of the federal government), the U.S. Navy’s decision to kill 200 wild and free roaming burros on its Naval Weapons Center at China Lake, Calif., came as no surprise to HSUS investigators. Notified of the Navy’s plan in early February, the HSUS’s West Coast Regional Office, under the leadership of Regional Director Herb Martin, began a thorough investigation.

According to provisions of the federal Wild and Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act of 1971, feral burros inhabiting “public lands” cannot be destroyed without a complete study having been made of the situation, and written permission having been obtained from the Secretary of the Interior. The Navy, however, interpreted the law as excluding military property.

The commander of the China Lake Naval Weapons Center, therefore, obtained a depredation permit from the California Dept. of Food and Agriculture, which is valid until Aug. 26, 1973. This permit gives the Navy authority to shoot 200 wild burros that inhabit the Naval Weapons Center’s Mojave “B” Range. The request for the permit was based on the Navy’s assertion that the burros were starving to death because of lack of forage.

In early April, Martin and I toured the China Lake center and observed some of the 200 “starving” burros. To our surprise, the entire Mojave “B” Range was covered with a luxuriant ephemeral growth of wild flowers.

(Continued on next page.)
The West Coast Regional Office will give us an opportunity to better serve individuals and organizations on the West Coast," said HSUS President John A. Hoyt, who was instrumental in establishing the regional structure. "Most important, it gives us another link in our efforts to prevent cruelty to animals throughout the United States."

The many programs and activities formerly conducted and promoted by the California Branch are being continued under this new auspices," Hoyt continued. "Former Branch members can be assured that the concern for animal welfare throughout California will go forward with the same dedication and commitment as before."

Martin comes to the regional directorship from 17 years of professional work in all aspects of national, state, and local humane activities.

Working with Martin will be Field Representative Michael D. Smith, who is the former director of services for the California Branch, and Education and Information Director Charles Drennon, who was office manager of the California Branch.

During the first weeks of operation, the staff has been concentrating on learning the issues that are most crucial to all areas of the four-state region. They have met with the state’s supervisors and key advisors from the humane societies of several other communities to assist in developing improved animal control programs.

"We are available to counsel both governmental and private groups in the prevention of animal cruelty, including building of facilities and establishment of spay and neuter clinics," Martin said. "We will be glad to help anyone, as staff availability permits."

The staff will also investigate and assist in prosecuting cruelty cases, heal mistreatment of exotic animals in captivity.

"We very much need the help and encouragement of all humanitarian organizations in California and the rest of the region," Hoyt said. "We welcome the support of everyone."

**Contributions, Bequests**

Any persons wanting to contribute to the work and programs of the HSUS West Coast Regional Office are asked to send their gifts to:

HSUS West Coast Regional Office
4, 1713 J St., Sacramento, CA 95814

The HSUS West Coast Regional Office is located in Suite 4, 1713 J St., Sacramento, CA 95814. Phone: (916) 447-2235.

**QUESTION OF VALUES Continued and spring grasses. Recent rains have brought the burros with rich desert pasture. As usual, water was readily available, and the burros themselves appeared to be in quite a condition, with several of the jennies (female burros) being heavy with foal. A talk given previously confirmed HSUS's belief that there is currently no justification for the destruction of the burros. By the Navy's own admission, the burros are not widely known to the general public. For example: The Navy has routinely slaughtered hundreds of wild burros at the Mojave "B" Range for the last several years, while publicly conceding that the animals in no way affect military operations. The entire eastern portion of Death Valley National Park has been declared "a black place" by government aircraft, poisoned, trapped, etc. Yet, not one photograph or other shred of tangible evidence has been presented that would substantiate the claim that the burros are a problem other than eliminating the burros. The HSUS petitioned the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of the Navy to terminate China Lake's "depopulation activity," upon the grounds that there has been a failure of study and other tests had been conducted. HSUS asked the base commander to delay any action until the report to the public. Similarly, HSUS also asked the California Dept. of Food and Agriculture to revoke the Navy's permit to destroy the burros. As the questions of legality and jurisdiction had been cleared up. Almost immediately that department's Conservation Program Director stated that HSUS that it had no intention of revoking the permit to kill the burros. Supporting the HSUS's position that the burros (whether or not they are protected by California law) should not be harmed, State Assemblyman Rakensfield issued a formal protest to China Lake's base commander. In a tele­

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**Garden Grove Center Under New Auspicies**

The Garden Grove Animal Care and Humane Education Center, a project of the former HSUS California Branch, will now be known as the Golden State Humane Society.

"While this project is no longer officially a part of the HSUS program at Garden Grove, the work of the Golden State Humane Society much in this effort," HSUS President John A. Hoyt said. "We are grateful to have had a part in having birth to this new venture."
California


Experimentation in Public Schools (SB 112, Rodda)—prohibits experiments on animals in secondary schools: signed by Governor on June 1.

Exotic Animals (SB 187, Moscone)—prohibits importation and sale of exotic mammals: passed Natural Resources Comm.; pending in Finance Comm.

Spay Incentive (SB 335, Nejedly)—provides $7 license fee for unspayed dogs and cats, $3.50 for spayed: passed Local Government Comm.; pending in Finance Comm.

Citation Authority (SB 499, Gregorio)—gives animal control citation authority to employees of humane groups providing municipal animal control service: Judiciary Comm.

Ban on Sale of Cat or Dog Skin (SB 766, Roberti; AB 461, Boatwright)—prohibits selling any dog or cat for purpose of selling skin: Senate Judiciary Comm., House Ways and Means Comm.

Legalize Dog Racing (AB 70, Powers)—authorizes greyhound racing (which HSUS opposes) in state: Government Organization Comm.

Pet Birth Control (AB 77, Cullen)—gives $50,000 to University of California for research of ingested type contraceptives (no longer stipulates that money is to be raised by a tax on pet food): passed Agriculture Comm.; pending Ways and Means Comm.

Spay Clinic Financing (AB 1056, Arnett)—would provide $3 million to set up low-cost municipal spay clinics: pending Task Force Study Comm.

Animal Control Commission (AB 2100, Arnett)—sets standards, establishes Commission on Animal Care and Control, creates Animal Control Officers’ Training Fund: Criminal Justice Comm., to be heard in August.

Veterinary Assistants (AB 2101, Arnett)—provides licensing and regulation of veterinary assistants: pending, Task Force Study Comm.

Breeders Licensing (AB 2271, Berman)—creates Animal Breeders’ License Board: held until completion of Task Force Study Comm. report.

Abolition of Bounties (AB 2405, Boatwright): passed Natural Resources Comm.

Fox Protection (AB 2406, Boatwright)—bans taking of foxes for profit: pending Natural Resources Comm.

Nevada

Restriction on Running at Large (SB 529)—authorizes county commissioners to enact and enforce ordinances licensing dogs and prohibiting animals from running at large: signed into law, effective since March.

Fish and Game Authority (AB 466)—permits Fish and Game Dept. to protect property threatened by any wildlife species: signed into law, effective July 1.

Multiple Humane Societies (AB 533)—permits more than one humane society in a county: signed into law, effective July 1.

Oregon

Cockfighting (SB 201, Fadeley et al.)—bans and provides penalties for promoting animal fights: Agriculture Comm.

Cruelty Code Revision (SB 212, Browne et al.)—redefines cruelty, at request of Oregon Humane Society.

Steer Busting (SB 213, Browne)—defines torture in animal cruelty statutes to include steer busting: Agriculture Comm.

Police Power (SB 223, Howard et al.)—takes police power from attorney general’s office and gives humane officers status of peace officers: Agriculture Comm.

Spaying Incentive (HB 2167, Dennis)—allows exemption on personal state income tax up to $100 for spaying dogs and cats.

Steel Jaw Trap Ban (HB 2544, Willits): tabled.

Bounty Repeal (HB 2593, Whiting).

State Pet Animal Control Act (HB 2734)—creates state advisory committee: Agriculture and Natural Resources Comm.

Dog Control (HB 2783, Patterson)—designates certain dogs as nuisances and establishes dog control violations; sets up Dog License Fund for emergency care; authorizes owner of livestock killed by dogs to bring action against dog owner for double damages: Agriculture Comm.

Endangered Species (HB 2811, Whiting)—bans importation and sale of certain endangered species.

Bounties on Predators (HB 2812, Whiting et al.)—authorizes Director of Agriculture to establish bounties for predatory animals in areas where they threaten livestock or crops.

Washington

Revision of Cruelty Law (SB 2554, Murray, Metcalf)—to revise state laws on prevention of cruelty to animals.

Ban on Steer Busting (SB 2545, Scott, Francis).

Ban on Steel Jaw Trap (HB 701, Rable, Nelson).

Ban on Wild Animal Skins (HB 439, Bluechel).